

NSC BRIEFING

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11 April 1957

JORDAN SITUATION


- I. The resignation of Prime Minister Nabulsi and his leftist-dominated cabinet on 10 April after 11 days of intensive political maneuvering does not yet clearly indicate a victory for pro-Western Jordanian forces. It has been accompanied thus far by at least two other key personnel ^{CHANGES} which appear unfavorable to Western interests and may actually curtail the power of King Hussain.
 - A. Hussain this morning asked Dr. Hussain Khalidi, 63 year-old Arab diplomat and nationalist, to attempt to form a new government.
 - B. Outgoing Prime Minister Nabulsi is reported to have stated that this left-wing National Socialist Party would not participate in the new government. Participation of the left-wing pro-Egyptian Baath Party and the Communist-dominated National Bloc Party, which together with the National Socialists dominated the Nabulsi government, also appears doubtful.
 1. Non-participation of these parties in a new cabinet raises the possibility that they may attempt to call out street mobs and armed leftist paramilitary groups in an effort to prevent formation of a new cabinet. This threat of violence had forestalled Hussain from attempting to change the cabinet up to now.

2. The moves undertaken thus far appear to have concentrated power in the hands of the army.
3. The army's loyalty, however, remains uncertain, although Hussain has recently professed confidence in its support.



II. The pro-Hussain director of public security and police, Bajat Tabbara, was dismissed on 10 April. Tabbara's removal had been a key leftist objective. Damascus radio statements also suggest that the directorate of police and security has been placed under General Nuwar.

A. The loyalty of Tabbara's replacement, newly promoted Major General Mohammad Maayta, moreover, seems doubtful.

1. He is reported to be a supporter of the pro-Egyptian left-wing Baath Party, and of the ultranationalist "free officers" group. He was recently Jordan's military attache in Beirut, 

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2. Despite this background, the king recently made Maayta his senior aide and expressed confidence in his loyalty.

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III. Saudi Arabia's King Saud has strongly supported King Hussain in the latter's struggle with his anti-monarchical Egyptian-backed opposition.

- A. It is doubtful that even Cairo wishes actually to depose Hussain at present, lest it betray weaknesses in the facade of Arab unity.**
- B. Cairo may therefore have thrown support to the army at the last minute in order to prevent civil war.**

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